

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
MCT-02 SY-05 HA-05 /078 W
-----021531 301635Z /47

R 301621Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9562
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMCONSUL BELFAST

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT PINS UK
SUBJECT: VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND: CONTINUING AT
MODERATE LEVEL

REF: (A) BELFAST 147 (B) BELFAST 148

THIS MESSAGE WAS PREPARED BY CONGEN BELFAST AUGUST 27

L. SUMMARY: TERRORIST ACTION DURING THE PAST TWO-PLUS

OF THE PROVISIONAL IRA OFFENSIVE THAT HAS BEEN WIDELY
EXPECTED. POLICE AND ARMY CONTINUE TO BE ALMOST THE
EXCLUSIVE TARGETS. THERE WAS SOME STREET RIOTING --
SMALL IN SCALE BUT MUCH MORE THAN USUAL THESE DAYS.
THE MOST STRIKING EVENT WAS THE PLANTING OF BOMBS IN
BRITISH ARMY POSTS IN WEST GERMANY -- AN ACTION THAT
APPEARED AS INEPTLY EXECUTED AS A HOMEMADE MORTAR ATTACK
ON A POLICE-ARMY BASE IN SOUTH ARMAGH. PEOPLE ARE
STARTING TO GET A BIT BORED BY THE WHOLE THING. END
SUMMARY

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2. TWO SOLDIERS, A FORMER PART-TIME SOLDIER OF THE
ULSTER DEFENSE REGIMENT, AND AN OLDER MAN WITH NO
APPARENT CONNECTION TO THE SECURITY FORCES, WERE
KILLED. TWO POLICEMEN, TWO SOLDIERS AND ANOTHER /UDR

CATHOLIC WEST BELFAST. THESE SERIOUS INCIDENTS RANGED

FROM SOUTH ARMAGH NEAR THE IRISH BORDER TO LONDONDERRY
AND THE CENTER OF THE PROVINCE. AN AUGUST 25 ATTACK
ON THE POLICE-ARMY BASE IN CROSSMAGLEN, SOUTH ARMAGH,
BY A COUPLE OF DOZEN HOMEMADE MORTAR SHELLS WAS A BUST:
HALF THE SHELLS WERE DUDS, AND NONE HIT ANYTHING
WORTHWHILE. BUT IT WAS THE BIGGEST EVER USE OF THIS
PIRA MORTAR, FIRED FROM A HIJACKED TRUCK, AND THE
FIRST IN SOME MONTHS.

3. THERE WERE SEVERAL LESS SERIOUS INCIDENTS IN
BELFAST AND ELSEWHERE, BUT WITH TERRORIST ACTION
CONCENTRATED ON THE POLICE AND ARMY, PEOPLE STARTED
RELAXING. AS THOUGH TO REMIND CIVILIANS THAT THEIR
WAR CONTINUES, PIRA (AS WE ASSUME -- ANOTHER NAME
CLAIMED THE HIT) AUGUST 24 DESTROYED A FURNITURE
WAREHOUSE IN HEAVILY PROTESTANT EAST BELFAST WITH
NO-WARNING BLAST INCENDIARY BOMBS.

4. THE PROTESTANT APPRENTICE BOYS PARADE IN LONDONDERRY
AUGUST 12 -- OFTEN THE CATALYST OF STREET VIOLENCE --
ENDED THE TRADITIONAL MARCHING SEASON WITH LITTLE
TROUBLE: A HUNDRED YOUNGSTERS STONED SOLDIERS, WHO
CHARGED THEM AND FIRED RUBBER BULLETS. A LARGE SWEEP
WAS MADE AUGUST 22 AGAINST THE DERRY PROVISIONAL SINN
FEIN, PIRA'S POLITICAL WING. SEVEN MEMBERS WERE
ARRESTED (TO BE RELEASED THREE DAYS LATER) AND CON-
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SIDERABLE MATERIAL SEIZED. THE OPERATION APPEARS PART
OF THE POLICE'S CAMPAIGN TO DEVELOP EVIDENCE LINKING

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THE PSF AND PIRA. A FAIR AMOUNT OF SMALL SCALE STREET RIOTING FOLLOWED IN DERRY, WITH SOME VEHICLE BURNING AND STONING.

5. THE MOST NOTABLE NEWS WAS THE EXPLOSION OR FINDING UNEXPLODED OF A NUMBER OF BOMBS AUGUST 18 AND 24 ON BRITISH ARMY INSTALLATIONS IN WEST LERMAN. WE HAVE NO DEFINITE WORD ON RESPONSIBILITY, BUT FROM HERE IT LOOKS LIKE PIRA. APPARENTLY LITTLE SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE WAS DONE -- WHETHER BY DESIGN OR MORE INEPTITUDE.

6. THE BLANKET MEN: THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION AUGUST 27 OF THE FIRST BIG CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH IN NORTHERN IRELAND HAS BEEN TAKEN OVER BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA'S FRONT GROUP PROTESTING IN FAVOR OF POLITICAL STATUS FOR PIRA PRISONERS. MODERATES WHO LED THE ORIGINAL MARCH (SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND LABOR PARTY LEADERS AUSTIN CURRIE AND GERRY FITT) HAVE ANNOUNCED THEY WILL NOT PARTICIPATE UNDER THESE CON-

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DITIONS. PIRA AND ITS FRONTS ARE ALSO EXPLOITING THE HUNGER STRIKE AND ATTENDANT PUBLICITY OF PRISONER WILLIE GALLAGHER, WHOSE PARENTS SAY HE WAS CONVICTED UNJUSTLY OF A TERRORIST ACT.

STREATOR

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